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AUTHOR	Chobot, Mary C.
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ABSTRACT

State Library Agencies (SLAs) and library members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) were surveyed to collect data from potential audiences for American Memory products to assist the planners for this Library of Congress (LC) project. This summary report briefly explains the purpose of the surveys; describes the survey methodology and instrument development; and summarizes the survey findings in terms of the types of optical equipment owned by the libraries, and the types of features that respondents would like to see incorporated in workstations providing access to American Memory collections. (It was found that over 90% of the survey populations agreed that these workstations should allow full-text searching capability; be able to capture and hold selected items in machine memory for later presentation or the creation of new documents; be able to download to floppy disc; and allow users to make paper copies of materials. A high degree of interest was noted among state library agencies and ARL libraries in having access to selected LC collections on optical media. The third section presents general conclusions and of the survey populations recommendations having to do with state library agency services, the type of delivery platform, the amount of space needed, costs, and pilot sites. (MAB)

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Final Report of Two Surveys: State Library Agencies and Member Libraries of the Association of Research Libraries

Prepared for
American Memory Project
Library of Congress

By
Mary C. Chobot, PhD

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Mary C. Chobot and Associates
Applied Research, Evaluation, and Continuing Education for the Profession

4950 Andrea Avenue Annandale, VA 22003-4166 (703) 323-9402

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Overview

This section of the report explains the purpose of the surveys and describes how the project was conducted. The structure of the remaining three sections of the report is also briefly discussed.

Purpose of the Surveys

Two surveys: a Survey of State Library Agencies (SLAs), and a Survey of Research Libraries which are members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), were conducted during January-July 1989 for the American Memory Project at the Library of Congress (LC).

The surveys were undertaken to collect data from potential audiences for American Memory products to assist in project planning.

Dr. Mary Chobot served as a consultant to the project during its initial start-up phase, August-December 1988, and then managed the data collection efforts described in this report.

Methodology

The study had five major phases: instrument development, data collection, data entry, analysis of the data and writing of the final report.

Instrument Development

A **Preliminary Survey Design and Data Collection Plan** was prepared in December and discussed with members of the American Memory Project Team: Robert Zich, Carl Fleischhauer and Ricky Erway, during early January.

It was decided that the data would be collected by means of mailed instruments, with telephone follow-up to increase the level of response.

An initial draft of the survey instrument for the Survey of State Library Agencies and a cover letter were prepared in January and reviewed by the American Memory Project Team and members of the American Memory Advisory Committee. The questionnaire and the cover letter were revised, based on the feedback received, and then reviewed by two state librarians. Final revisions were incorporated into the documents, so that they were ready for mail-out.

Optical Equipment

Both populations have greater numbers of CD-ROM players installed than either laser videodisk players or CD-Audio players. The SLAs also estimated that more libraries in their states had CD-ROM players than either laser videodisk players or CD-Audio players.

It is assumed that any CD-ROM applications of America Memory would adhere to the ISO 9660, or High Sierra standard, which would allow the disks to be used on most, if not all, commercially available CD-ROM players.

If laser videodisk players are required to access images in American Memory collections, it appears that many libraries would have to acquire this equipment.

American Memory Features

Both surveys requested respondent comments on a number of potentially desirable features which could be incorporated into the American Memory delivery system or workstations.

Over 90 percent of all respondents in both groups strongly agreed, or agreed, that workstations providing access to American Memory collections should:

- allow full-text searching capability
- be able to capture and hold selected items in machine memory for later presentation, or creation of new documents
- be able to download to floppy disc
- allow users to make paper copies of materials.

The strong desire by both populations for **full text searching capability** should be taken into consideration in selecting or designing a user interface or delivery system for American Memory.

The other features discussed above should also be made available to American Memory users if possible.

Conclusions and Recommendations

There is a high degree of interest among SLAs and ARL libraries in having access to selected Library of Congress collections on optical media.

SLAs

It was noted in Section II that:

The types of services which state library agencies provide to libraries in their states indicate that, in many instances, the SLA is in an excellent position to promote and support the use of American Memory products throughout the state.

In some states, the SLA is the exclusive state agency with responsibility for libraries in the state; in other states, it is a shared responsibility. This has possible implications for coordination of access to American Memory within a state.

Both of these conclusions should be taken into account as planning for future phases of American Memory continues.

Delivery Platform

A microcomputer hardware and CD-ROM player base exists in the populations surveyed. IBM or compatible microcomputers and MS-DOS operating systems are most common in these facilities. However, Apple computers are also found, but in smaller numbers, especially in ARL facilities. Other microcomputers, such as UNIX based systems, are not currently available in significant numbers in these libraries or SLAs.

Planning for American Memory dissemination must take both of these delivery platforms into account.

If a choice must be made, the following should be considered. Four models of Apple computers (the Macintosh SE30, IIcx, II, IIx) have high density internal floppy drives which provide the ability to read MS-DOS and OS/2 disks, as well as Macintosh disks; other Apple computers can be upgraded to read MS-DOS disks. Furthermore, MS-DOS applications can be run on Apple computers, using either software such as Soft PC, or special boards. However, Macintosh applications such as

hypercard **cannot** be used on MS-DOS operating systems.

Given that MS-DOS is the predominant disc operating system software in the two populations studied; and the fact that Apple machines can be made to accommodate MS-DOS applications; any search and retrieval software or user interface that might be supplied with American Memory products, at least as regards SLAs and ARL libraries, should be MS-DOS compatible.

Space

Also to be taken into account regarding equipment is the **amount of space** which would be required for an American Memory workstation. As the state librarians pointed out during the discussion session which was held at LC, many smaller libraries across the nation would not have the physical space to accommodate an American Memory workstation if it required as much space to house as the prototype hardware.

Cost

Cost of the workstation itself, as well as the amount of **staff time** necessary to support it, were also expressed concerns by both groups in open-ended comments and in the discussion session held with the SLAs. Failure to consider this point in project planning could inhibit the use of American Memory products in smaller libraries with limited budgets.

Pilot Sites

The majority of SLAs and ARL libraries surveyed expressed an interest in being considered as potential test or demonstration sites. They also indicated the kinds of support they would be wiling to provide as participants in an American Memory Pilot. Several respondents provided additional comments and suggestions in regard to potential pilots. This information should be helpful as the Pilot Phase of the American Memory Project is planned.